

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03 H-02

ACDA-05 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 MC-02 (ISO) W

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R 210919Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2078

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

S E C R E T ANKARA 0494

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, PFOR, MASS, XG, TU

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENTAL STUDY OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS SUPPLY RESTRAINTS

REF: STATE 4313

1. AS FAR AS US-TURKISH RELATIONSHIP IS CONCERNED, THE
TIMING COULD NOT BE MORE ADVERSE FOR ANY US-LED MOVEMENT TO
RESTRICT THE FLOW OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS. I THEREFORE
RECOMMEND THAT ANY STUDY ON LIMITING ARMS FLOW BE KEPT
STRICTLY IN-HOUSE AND THAT US NOT RPT NOT IN NEAR FUTURE
TAKE ANY INITIATIVES ON THIS WITH OUR EUROPEAN ALLIES.

2. EVEN WITHOUT THE ADDED COMPLICATION OF ON-GOING
NEGOTIATIONS WITH TURKS TO DETERMINE FUTURE OF OUR MILITARY
PRESENCE AND RELATIONSHIP HERE, WE WOULD EXPECT A SHARPLY NEGATIVE

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POLITICAL REACTION FROM TURKS TO US INITIATIVE

AIMED AT RESTRAINING CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFERS. TURKEY IS ALMOST WHOLLY DEPENDENT ON FOREIGN SUPPLIERS FOR HER ARMAMENTS, AND WELL OVER NINETY PERCENT OF TURKISH ARMED FORCES' INVENTORY IS US ORIGIN. MUCH OF THAT EQUIPMENT IS OBSOLESCENT OR OBSOLETE WWII AND KOREAN WAR VINTAGE, AND TURKEY IS LAGGING IN ACHIEVING NATO FORCE GOALS. AS EVIDENCED BY BITTER TURKISH REACTION TO US ARMS EMBARGO, TURKS ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO ABILITY TO PROCURE ARMS TO MODERNIZE AND UPGRADE THEIR FORCES AND WILL UNDOUBTEDLY CONTINUE TO DO SO FAR INTO THE FUTURE.

3. ON TOP OF TURKISH SENSITIVITIES CONCERNING THEIR RIGHT AS A NATO ALLY TO PROCURE ARMS, WE ARE NOW IN THROES OF TRYING TO RESTRUCTURE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE OF THE ONCE EXTREMELY CLOSE AND MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIP WE HAD WITH TURKEY, A RELATIONSHIP SERIOUSLY BUT NOT YET IRREVOCABLY DAMAGED BY THE US EMBARGO ON ARMS SUPPLY TO TURKEY. OUR ABILITY TO RESTRUCTURE THAT RELATIONSHIP DEPENDS LARGELY AT THIS POINT ON OUR BEING ABLE TO ASSURE THE TURKS IN SOME WAY THAT TURKEY'S CONVENTIONAL ARMS NEEDS WILL BE MET. THE OUTCOME OF OUR EXTREMELY DELICATE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE TURKS MAY HINGE LARGELY ON JUST HOW MUCH CREDIBILITY WE HAVE. ANY HINT AT THIS TIME OF A US-LED MOVEMENT TO RESTRICT SUPPLY OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS COULD SEVERELY DAMAGE THAT CREDIBILITY.

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